

# PARALEGAL SPECIALIST


## CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION

1 vacancy in the following location:

 Tucson, AZ

Work Schedule is Full Time - Permanent

Opened Monday 12/22/2014  
(508 day(s) ago)

 Closed Wednesday 1/7/2015  
(492 day(s) ago)

### Salary Range

\$57,982.00 to \$75,376.00 / Per Year

### Series & Grade

GS-0950-11/11

### Promotion Potential

11

### Supervisory Status

No

### Who May Apply

Current Federal employees with competitive status (including serving under a VRA appointment), current and former federal employees eligible under Interchange, reinstatement eligibles, VEOA eligibles, and Special Appointing Authority eligibles.

### Control Number

389547100

### Job Announcement Number

MHCBPMP-1285392-RAB

## Job Summary

### *Customs & Border Protection (CBP): Securing America's Borders*

Do you desire to protect American interests and secure our Nation while building a meaningful and rewarding career? If so, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is calling. DHS components work collectively to prevent terrorism, secure borders, enforce and administer immigration laws, safeguard cyberspace and ensure resiliency to disasters. The vitality and magnitude of this mission is achieved by a diverse workforce spanning hundreds of occupations. Make an impact; join DHS.

Discover a challenging and rewarding career in CBP, the sole organization responsible for securing the nation's borders. At U.S. Customs and Border Protection, we:

- Screen passengers, vehicles, and shipments entering our country
- Seize illegal narcotics, vehicles, and agricultural products
- Prevent unauthorized entry into the country
- Rescue individuals who fall into dangerous conditions traversing our border

For more information about CBP's mission, activities, and careers, please see <http://www.cbp.gov>.

This position will allow you to use your expertise to provide legal support to those executing the law enforcement duties at an Office of Border Patrol Sector. This position starts at a salary of \$57,982 (GS-11, Step 1). Apply for this exciting opportunity to strengthen Homeland Security by performing paralegal activities such as reviewing and finalizing claims, preparing cases, and participating in the work of a paralegal team.

### **Who May Apply:** Status Candidates which include:

Current Federal employees with competitive status (as well as current Federal employees serving under a VRA appointment);

Current and former Federal employees who meet the established criteria in an Office of Personnel Management Interchange Agreement; Former Federal employees with reinstatement eligibility; Veterans who are preference eligibles or who have been separated under honorable conditions after 3 years or more of continuous service will receive consideration under the

Veterans Employment Opportunity Act (VEOA); Individuals who are eligible under a Special Appointing Authority. Please see the "Special Appointing Authority" paragraph in the "Other" section of this vacancy announcement.

If you do not meet the requirements above, you may be eligible to apply through *(insert link to DE JOA if applicable)*

- For definitions of terms found in this announcement, please see [http://www.dhs.gov/xabout/careers/gc\\_1303762131481.shtm](http://www.dhs.gov/xabout/careers/gc_1303762131481.shtm).

**Organizational Location:** This position is located within U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Office of Border Patrol, Tucson Sector Headquarters/Asset Forfeiture Office located in Tucson, AZ.

One or more selections may be made using this job opportunity announcement.

## Duties

In this Paralegal Specialist position you will become a key member of a team of Homeland Security professionals providing key legal support for the law enforcement duties at the sector level. Typical work assignments include:

- Performing legal support work arising from seizures, penalties, and liquidated damages assessed under applicable laws and regulations
- Reviewing and finalizing claims for liquidated damages and penalty cases
- Preparing synopses of cases including alternatives and recommended solutions
- Holding conferences with the importing public to provide status of cases or required procedures

## Travel Required

- Not Required

## Relocation Authorized

- No

## Key Requirements

- You must be a U.S. Citizen to apply for this position
- You may be required to pass a background investigation and/or polygraph
- Males born after 12/31/1959 must be registered with Selective Service
- Primary U.S. residency for the last three years (see "Other Information")
- You may be required to pass initial and random drug testing.

## Qualifications

**GS-11:** You qualify at the GS-11 level if you possess one (1) year of specialized experience that equipped you with the skills needed to perform the job duties. Such examples include reviewing and processing cases within assigned authority through to solution; receiving, examining and evaluating petitions filed by individuals, corporations or attorneys seeking relief from seizures, penalties or liquidated damages; and reviewing and making decisions as to acceptability of evidence in fraud cases, significant seizure cases and in any case of unusual complexity.

## SUBSTITUTION OF EDUCATION FOR EXPERIENCE

**GS-11:** You may substitute a Ph.D. or an equivalent doctoral degree or 3 full years of progressively higher level graduate education leading to such a degree in any field, or L.L.M for the experience required at the GS-11 grade level. Such education must have been obtained in an accredited college or university. Check with your school to determine how many

credit hours comprise three years of graduate study. If that information is not available, use 54 semester or 81 quarter hours. You are required to submit proof of your claim.

### Combining Experience and Education:

To combine your education and experience, you must convert each to a percentage, and then add the percentages. The combined total of your percentage of education and experience must equal at least 100% in order to qualify. If your education is currently described in quarter hours, convert the quarter hours into semester hours by multiplying the quarter hours by the fraction 2/3. To calculate your percentage of graduate education, divide the number of graduate semester hours in excess of the amount required for the next lower grade level, by 18. To determine your percentage of qualifying experience, you must divide your total number of months of qualifying experience by the required number of months of experience. Add your percentages of education and experience. The two percentages must total at least 100%.

Experience refers to paid and unpaid experience, including volunteer work done through National Service programs (e.g., Peace Corps, AmeriCorps) and other organizations (e.g., professional; philanthropic; religious; spiritual; community, student, social). Volunteer work helps build critical competencies, knowledge, and skills and can provide valuable training and experience that translates directly to paid employment. You will receive credit for all qualifying experience, including volunteer experience.

You must:

- Meet all qualification requirements, including education, subject to verification at any stage of the application process; and
- Meet all applicable Time in Grade requirements (current Federal employees must have served 52 weeks at the next lower grade or equivalent grade band in the Federal service) by Wednesday, January 07, 2015.

**Training:** You may be required to attend five (5) weeks of paid training at Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Georgia.

**Probationary Period:** All employees new to the federal government must serve a one year probationary period during the first year of his/her initial permanent federal appointment to determine fitness for continued employment. Current and former federal employees may be required to serve or complete a probationary period.

**Background Investigation:** Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is a federal law enforcement agency that requires all applicants to undergo a thorough background investigation prior to employment in order to promote the agency's core values of vigilance, service to country and integrity. During the screening and/or background investigation process, you will be asked questions regarding any felony criminal convictions or current felony charges, the use of illegal drugs (i.e., marijuana, cocaine, heroin, LSD, methamphetamines, ecstasy) and the use of non-prescribed controlled substances including any experimentation, possession, sale, receipt, manufacture, cultivation, production, transfer, shipping, trafficking, or distribution of controlled substances. Entry into this position may require that you successfully pass a polygraph examination. For more information, please see: [http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/careers/apply/mandatory\\_back\\_invest.xml](http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/careers/apply/mandatory_back_invest.xml).

### Security Clearance

Public Trust - Background Investigation

### What To Expect Next

Once the job opportunity announcement has closed, we will assess your experience and training, identify the best qualified applicants, and refer those applications to the hiring manager for further consideration and interviews. You will be notified by email after each of these steps has been completed. Stay informed of changes to your application status by signing up for automatic email alerts at: <https://my.usajobs.gov/Account/NotificationSettings.aspx>. If you are referred, you will receive a final notification of the disposition of the announcement. We expect to make a tentative job offer within 60 days after the close of the announcement. If you are selected, we may conduct a suitability/security background investigation.

### BENEFITS

DHS offers competitive starting salaries and an attractive benefits package, including: health, vision, dental, life and long-term care insurance, Thrift Savings Plan (similar to a 401(k)), Flexible Spending Account, retirement plan, Employee Assistance Program, personal leave days and paid federal holidays. Other benefits may include: flexible work schedules, telework, tuition reimbursement, transportation subsidies, uniform allowance, health and wellness programs, and fitness centers. DHS is committed to employee development and offers a variety of employee training and development opportunities. For more information, please go to [www.dhs.gov/careers](http://www.dhs.gov/careers) and select "Benefits".

To compare cost of living data, calculate mortgage scenarios, or gather information on communities and school districts, please visit the website: <http://www.relocationessentials.com/aff/lifecare/tools/salary/col.aspx>

## Other Information

This position is in the bargaining unit.

**Residency:** If you are not currently a CBP employee, you must meet one or more of the following primary residency criteria for the last three years prior to applying to this announcement:

1. Resided in the United States or its protectorate or territories (excluding short trips abroad, such as vacations);
2. Worked for the United States government as an employee overseas in a federal or military capacity; or
3. Been a dependent of a United States federal or military employee serving overseas.

Exceptions may be granted if you provide complete state-side coverage information regarding participation in "Study Abroad" programs, church overseas missions, or state-side addresses of anyone who worked or studied with you overseas. You must provide information and related documentation at the time of application.

**Special Appointing Authority:** Veterans, military spouses, Peace Corps/VISTA volunteers, and people with disabilities possess a wealth of unique talents, experiences, and competencies that can be invaluable to the DHS mission. If you are a member of one of these groups, you may not have to compete with the public for federal jobs. To determine your eligibility and to understand what documentation would be required with your application, please click on the appropriate link below.

Veterans: <http://www.fedshirevets.gov/index.aspx>; Military spouse: <http://www.fedshirevets.gov/job/shams/index.aspx>  
Individuals with Disabilities: <http://www.opm.gov/disability/PeopleWithDisabilities.asp> Peace Corps/VISTA and other miscellaneous hiring authorities: [http://www.opm.gov/hr\\_practitioners/lawsregulations/appointingauthorities/](http://www.opm.gov/hr_practitioners/lawsregulations/appointingauthorities/)

Separate referral lists will be generated for applicants eligible to be appointed under a non-competitive special appointing authority. You must provide documentation supporting your eligibility prior to the closing date of this announcement (please see "Required Documents"). If you have any questions regarding your eligibility, please contact the Human Resources Specialist listed at the end of this job opportunity announcement.

CBP uses E-Verify, an internet-based system, to confirm the eligibility of all newly hired employees to work in the United States. Learn more about E-Verify here, <http://www.uscis.gov/e-verify>, including your rights and responsibilities.

Every individual receives a fair opportunity throughout the Federal recruitment and hiring process. To learn more, click on the link [https://hru.gov/Studio\\_Recruitment/tools/Mythbuster\\_on\\_Federal\\_Hiring\\_Policies.pdf](https://hru.gov/Studio_Recruitment/tools/Mythbuster_on_Federal_Hiring_Policies.pdf)

Follow U.S. Customs and Border Protection on Twitter [@CustomsBorder](https://twitter.com/CustomsBorder)

To begin your online application, click "**Apply Online**" to create a USAJOBS account and follow the prompts or log in to your existing account. Your application packet must include a completed assessment questionnaire, a resume, and any applicable and/or required supporting documentation. Please see the "Required Documents" section below for additional information. All application materials, including transcripts, must be in English.

We strongly encourage you to apply online. If you cannot apply online, you may fax your resume, assessment questionnaire, and supporting documents to **(478) 757-3144**. You must print a copy of and document your responses to the assessment questionnaire [View Occupational Questionnaire](#) using OPM Form 1203-FX [http://www.opm.gov/Forms/pdf\\_fill/OPM1203fx.pdf](http://www.opm.gov/Forms/pdf_fill/OPM1203fx.pdf), and the official fax cover sheet: <http://staffing.opm.gov/pdf/usascover.pdf>. Please include job opportunity announcement ID 1285392 and provide your SSN, name, and address using the exact name you used when you filled out the questionnaire. If you have uploaded documents into your application, you do not need to fax those same documents.

**Applications and supporting documentation will not be accepted by mail or email.** The address below is for inquiries only. You may apply more than once, but the most recent application is the only one that will be used. **You must submit your resume, your online questionnaire, and any supporting documents by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on Wednesday, January 07, 2015**

## How You Will Be Evaluated

We will review your resume and supporting documentation to ensure you meet the basic qualification requirements. If you meet the minimum qualifications, your experience, education and training will be rated using an online self-assessment questionnaire that is based on the competencies or knowledge, skills, and abilities listed below. You will receive a score ranging from 70-100 based on your responses. Your entire application package will then be reviewed. The final determination will be based on all the information provided in your application package.

If you are best qualified, you may be referred to the hiring manager for consideration and may be called for an interview. To preview the job questionnaire, see [View Occupational Questionnaire](#).

### Knowledge, Skills, Abilities and Other Characteristics (KSAOs):

Candidates who meet the minimum qualification requirements are required to possess certain Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, or Other Characteristics (KSAOs) to successfully perform the functions of this position. Candidates will be asked to demonstrate their attainment of these KSAOs in their resume. The KSAOs are:

- Skill in performing legal support work under applicable laws and regulations
- Knowledge of various titles of law applicable to agency mission, Federal and State laws
- Ability to analyze problems to identify significant factors; gather pertinent data; and recognize solutions
- Ability to effectively communicate both orally and in writing

**Agency Career Transition Assistance Program (CTAP) or the Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP) eligibility:** If you have never worked for the federal government, you are not ICTAP/CTAP eligible. Information about ICTAP/CTAP eligibility is on the OPM's Career Transition Resources website at: [http://www.opm.gov/Reduction In Force/employee\\_resources/ctap/Employee-Guideline CTAP.asp#3a](http://www.opm.gov/Reduction%20In%20Force/employee_resources/ctap/Employee-Guideline_CTAP.asp#3a). To be considered well qualified under ICTAP/CTAP, you must be rated at a minimum score of 85 for this position. In addition, you must submit the supporting documents listed in the "Required Documents" section of this announcement.

- **Your resume:** A resume describing your job-related qualifications is required and will be used for the purpose of reviewing your qualifications and determining what training, if any, would be required when placed. Your resume must be in English and must include your job titles and a detailed description of your duties and the dates you performed them (MM/DD/YY), as well as your hours per week for each position listed. Your resume should also contain your full name, address, phone number, email address, and salary. NOTE: Resumes stored on USAJOBS will not automatically carry over to this announcement. You must upload or fax your resume and any other applicable supporting documentation.
- **Your responses to the job questionnaire** [View Occupational Questionnaire](#)
- **Are you a current or former Federal employee?** With the exception of current CBP employees, ALL CURRENT AND FORMER FEDERAL EMPLOYEES MUST SUBMIT A COPY OF THEIR SF-50B (Notification of Personnel Action) showing competitive status: Tenure 1 or 2 in Block 24 and Position Occupied 1 in Block 34. The SF-50B should also reflect the highest grade held on a permanent basis or the full performance level of your current position, whichever is higher.
- **Are you qualifying based on education?** Submit a copy of your college transcript (unofficial is acceptable at this time; however, official copies will be required prior to entrance on duty) or a list of coursework with hours completed. Education must be from an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of

Education. Education obtained from a foreign university or college is not creditable unless it has been evaluated by an organization that specializes in interpretation of education credentials. For a listing of accrediting agencies, please see <http://www.naces.org/members.htm>.

- **Are you claiming special priority selection rights under the Agency Career Transition Assistance Program (CTAP) or the Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP)?** You must submit a separation notice; your most recent SF-50B (noting your current position, grade level and duty location); a current (or last) performance rating of record of at least fully successful or equivalent; an agency certification that you cannot be placed after injury compensation has been terminated; an OPM notification that your disability annuity has been terminated; or a Military Department of National Guard Bureau notification that you are retired under 5 U.S.C. 8337(h) or 8456.
- **Are you a veteran?** If you are applying under a special veteran appointing authority, you must submit a DD 214 (Member Copy 4-reflecting qualifying medal(s) or service period) and a VA Disability Award letter dated 1991 or later (if applicable). Current federal employees applying under the VEOA authority must submit a qualifying SF-50B to show they meet time-in-grade requirements. If you are currently serving on active duty, you must submit a written statement from the armed forces certifying your dates of service and your rank. If you apply with a written statement at this stage, your preference will be verified by a DD 214 (Member Copy 4) upon separation from the military. To learn more click on the link <http://www.fedshirevets.gov/job/vetpref/index.aspx> **Veterans preference points are not applicable to Merit Promotion announcements; veterans documentation is required only to verify eligibility.**
- You may be asked to provide a copy of your recent performance appraisal and/or incentive awards. Consideration will be given to performance appraisals and incentive awards as an indication of quality prior experience, no points will be assigned.

**It is your responsibility to verify that any information entered, uploaded, or faxed is received and is accurate.** Human Resources will not modify or change any part of your application. If a document is not legible, you will not be able to view it in your application and you must again upload or fax it by the closing date.




**Customs & Border Protection**  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security CBP.gov

## Department Of Homeland Security

### Customs and Border Protection

#### Contact

CBP Hiring OBP Staffing  
Phone: (952)857-2935   
Email: CBPHIRING-OBPSTAFFING@CBP.DHS.GOV

#### Address

Customs and Border Protection  
5600 American Blvd  
Suite 700  
Bloomington  
MN  
USA  
(478)757-3144 